

Proudly Serving the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Community

Runners get down and dirty with 'Evil Eyes'

See related story on Page 7



Photo by Cpl. Kristopher S. Haloj

Remembering the forgotten war



Two Marines report by field telephone from a platoon command post somewhere in Korea, July 19, 1950. (See related story on Page 6) DoD photo

USPS unveils 'Honoring Veterans' stamp

By Rudi Williams

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Postal Service recently unveiled a new commemorative first-class postage stamp entitled 'Honoring Veterans' that is scheduled to be issued here in May 2001.

"The 'Honoring Veterans' stamp reminds us of the thousands of Americans, who have fought to keep our country free," said Deborah K. Willhite, the Postal Service's senior vice president for government relations and public policy, who unveiled the stamp. "It will serve as a 'thank you' to those who continue to serve as members of veterans service organizations."

She said many veterans organizations aid veterans and their families, including assistance with benefit applications, transportation to Veterans Affairs medical facilities and burial and memorial services. The present population of U.S. veterans is estimated to be nearly 25 million, Willhite noted.

Designed by Carl Herrman of Carlsbad, the stamp features a photograph of the



The Postal Service's recently unveiled "Honoring Veterans" stamp is slated for issue in May 2001. The stamp honors the patriotic dedication of all the men and women who have served in the armed forces. U.S. Postal Service photo

American flag.

The flag symbolizes veterans' patriotic service to the nation in peace and war. The phrase "Honoring Veterans" is at the top of the stamp, and the phrase "Continuing to Serve" appears at the bottom.

The new stamp and other currently available philatelic items can be viewed and ordered at the Postal Service Web site at <http://www.usps.com>. They also can be ordered by calling toll-free 1 (800) STAMP-24.

Quality of life (part II)

Housing Office can save renters money with no deposits, lower rent

Editor's note: Today, there are more Marine family members than there are active duty Marines. Former Secretary of Defense William Perry said, "Our people in uniform are walking investments. If we lose them, we've lost a valuable asset and hurt readiness in a very fundamental way. The main factor in retention is quality of life, not only for troops, but also their families." He went on to assert that housing is fundamental to quality of life. Military housing poses a unique challenge in the San Diego area. The following is the second in a series of articles highlighting the dynamic housing situation here. This story focuses on finding a place to rent in San Diego. Next week's article will conclude the series spotlighting the many programs available to help Miramar Marines become homeowners.

By 2nd Lt. Joshua G. Rushing

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Finding a place to rent in San Diego is much like going to a proctologist. You'll probably have to deal with an agonizing wait, and then go away feeling frustrated, uncomfortable and surprised at how much they charge for it.

Because of the very low vacancy rate – which is less than 1 percent – and the long wait for military housing – which is an average of 18 months – the Department of the Navy has declared San Diego a critical housing area.

With a Basic Allowance for Housing that is designed to cover only 80 percent of housing costs and the high cost of renting, servicemembers may find themselves looking at a Gordian knot. The Department of Defense has made

it a goal to bring the BAH up to 100 percent of housing costs, but not for another five years.

But you won't have to wait that long for help. Those looking for a place to rent are already armed with the solution. The San Diego Military Family Housing Office is an arsenal of personnel and resources whose sole mission is to help military families find a home in the San Diego area.

"We want them to come here before they go anywhere else," said Linda McGinn, director of the Personnel Support Division at the Military Family Housing Office of San Diego. "We can sit them down with a spe-

cialist that knows about the different area's schools and crime rates and that can really cater to their needs."

The counselors at the housing office don't have any easy job. Beside the difficulties associated with renting in San Diego, they often have to deal with aggravated and disappointed families. "My counselors are truly that. They get a lot of people who are frustrated with how much rent, childcare and electricity are here," Steven R. Finch, supervisor of the Assignment and Referral Branch at the housing office, said of incoming servicemembers' first reaction to the local area's high cost of living. "People get frustrated, and we try to deal with them the best we can."

Finch's staff of more than 30 assignment referral counselors and field representatives are equipped with more than compassion when it comes to succeeding in their mission of helping military families find a home.

They have a massive database of rentals in the area, and two programs – the Rental Partnership Program and Security Deposit Guarantee – that can save Marines and sailors some of their hard-earned greenbacks.

The Rental Partnership Program brings military renters and local landlords together in a win-win situation. If military members rent from participating property-owners, they don't have to put down a deposit or pay for a credit check, and they get 5 percent deducted from their monthly rent.

All they have to do is agree to pay the rent by electronic funds transfer. Landlords

will do it because it guarantees them timely rent payments, sends a cadre of customers their way and the Navy agrees to mediate any disagreements between the leaser and lessee.

"It is a great program," said McGinn. "There were only 500 participating families when I first came here a year ago, now there's more than a 1,000. And that's expanding rapidly as we get the word out."

The program has more than 13,000 participating units spread across San Diego County.

If a family can't find a home that fits their needs in the RPP, then the housing office has one other program that can help with finances. The Security Deposit Guarantee uses funds granted by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to loan E-5s and below money to pay deposits. The loan is repayable over 12 months at zero interest.

In addition to the RPP and the SDG, one of the most important things the counselors at the housing office bring to the table is their expertise. Rhonda Brown has been an assignment referral counselor in the housing office for seven years. She says she sends the great majority of her clients home satisfied. But that small percentage of people that incur the most problems do so because of their pre-existing personal challenges, she said.

According to Brown the most common problems that make it hard for families to find suitable housing are: a lack of funds, bad credit, no transportation or families too large to support on limited military pay.

Although a demanding job, Brown says she sticks to it because she loves helping people. "It's very rewarding when you meet someone in a difficult situation and then you help them and send them away happy," she said. Her three tips for families looking to rent are; "Don't be in a hurry to rent the first thing you see; use our resources; and let us help you."

Another service the housing office offers to help out families is a childcare center for parents when they come in. They welcome children from two to 12 years old. Parents are given pagers and the freedom to concentrate on finding the right home for their families.

Once you have rented a place, now you have some time to think about the next step in the housing process – buying a home. The housing office is there to help again. Look for next week's Flight Jacket for all the programs they offer to help you become a homeowner.

More information on the San Diego Military Housing Office, and the plethora of programs it runs for your benefit, can be found on the Internet at <http://www.mfhds.navy.mil>.

You can also call the main office on Naval Station San Diego at (619) 556-8443 or the Miramar Housing Office at (858) 577-1121.

"We can sit them down with a specialist that knows about the different area's schools and crime rates and that can really cater to their needs."

Linda McGinn,
Personnel Support Division director,
Military Family Housing, San Diego

Flight Jacket



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Bowdon**

Commander,
Marine Corps Air Bases
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Mir Remarks

If you had \$1000 to donate to the CFC, what charity would you give to and why?



Photo by Cpl. Mike Camacho

"I always give to the Hispanic College funds, because I see so many minorities who don't have enough money to go to school."

*Cpl. Naomi R. Clark,
Marine Wing Support Group 37,
classified material control center clerk*



Photo by Cpl. Mike Camacho

"I'd give it to orphanages for the children, especially during Christmas because they don't have parents to give them any presents. So hopefully, they can have a happier Christmas."

*Cpl. Isaac Valdez,
Marine Air Group 46,
embark noncommissioned officer*



Photo by Cpl. Mike Camacho

"I split my donations between the March of Dimes and the American Heart Association due to the things that have impacted friends and family in the past."

*Gunnery Sgt. James B. Bilicki,
Heavy Marine Helicopter Squadron 465,
line chief*

On liberty

At Miramar Flying Leathernecks Museum, the aircraft have stories to tell

By Dan Bennett

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They stand as if still ready for battle, and even if time and technology have made them obsolete, the aircraft at the Miramar Flying Leatherneck Museum look ready and able to serve.

The museum, located here, is the only Marine Corps aviation museum in existence and draws visitors from around the world. The museum relocated from the Corps' air station at nearby El Toro when it closed, and since a grand opening at its new home here in May has enjoyed considerable attention.

"Things are moving right along here," said museum director Tom O'Hara. "We have a foundation established to continue expanding, and we have ambitious plans for the future, including new hangar construction."

The museum owns more than 40 Marine aircraft, with some two dozen on display, and boasts historical information on planes flown by Marines from World War I through Operation Desert Storm.

"The idea of the museum is to present both the written and visual history of Marine aircraft, and showcase the hardware of that history," O'Hara said.

Restorations in Progress

The aircraft displayed on the museum's grounds is in various stages of restoration, and some parts of the older aircraft, such as wooden wings, have been removed and stored to prevent weather damage.

Aircraft on view includes the Grumman F4F (FM-2) Wildcat, the Grumman TBF, and the legendary B-25 Mitchell bomber. There



(Above) The F2H is an early jet from the 1948-1955 period. (Lower left) The F4U is the Marine Corps 'hallmark' aircraft from the World War II period flown by the famous Marine Corps 'Ace' Pappy Boyington. This model is from the Korean War time frame.

Photos courtesy of Thomas O'Hara

is an F9F fighter jet, as used in Korea, and an HRS H-19 helicopter. A Phantom F-4 jet from the Vietnam era is here, as is an AH-1 Cobra helicopter. The Douglas A-4M Skyhawk displayed is the last of its kind ever built. Within the museum's walls are dozens of photographs, including group shots of Marines as they train and prepare for battle, and dramatic actual mission photography.

With the support of the Flying Leatherneck Historical Association, a nonprofit organization comprising both retired Marine aviators and corporate sponsors, a multi-million dollar campaign is underway to continue expanding the museum.

"We will continue to search the country and the world for the proper aircraft to help represent the Marine Corps aviation program and the people who flew these aircraft," O'Hara said. "As much as the aircraft, it's about securing the space and the maintenance needs to keep the museum in top shape."

'Stories to Tell'

O'Hara says the museum has welcomed aircraft enthusiasts from around the world. "Just this week we've had tours from England and Germany," O'Hara said. "The people in these groups, military buffs with a fascination for American military machines, are overwhelmed when they see what we have here. They have read about and spent time talking about these aircraft, and now they get to see the real thing. They went berserk for the H-34."

The museum is a popular spot for area schoolchildren. O'Hara hopes to continue a program that began at El Toro, inviting adolescents from nearby detention facilities to visit the museum.

"Those kids are very interested in what we have," O'Hara said. "We're trying to motivate them into pursuing something more legitimate with their lives."

The museum has also become a popular destination for retired military people who visit San Diego, especially those who served in Marine Corps aviation units.

"We get everything from quiet reunions to men standing and watching these aircraft with tears rolling down their cheeks," O'Hara said. "This place has some stories to tell."

Another CFC choice

Retiree teaches homeless how to 'make a living, a life'

Courtesy of Jacquelyn Ostrom

NHA Clipsheet

The following story is part of a continuing series spotlighting some of the many charities open to service members through the Combined Federal Campaign.

The Department of Defense-wide 2000 CFC campaign began Sept. 25 and will end Dec. 15. With more than 1,700 charities, it is the largest campaign in the world and the San Diego area's drive is the second largest division of that campaign.

According to Capt. Carl A. Maas, CFC officer, Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area, the drive is on pace to match last year's success, but its challenge is to inform deployed service members about the drive and give them the opportunity to give. Marines aboard ships, at Combined Arms Exercises, at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, and on temporary additional duties are the ones who haven't heard about the campaign yet and Maas urges everyone to get the word out.

Many of the nation's 2.4 million retired federal employees continue serving their

country as volunteers in major charities like Volunteers of America.

For Berdj Kenadjian of Alexandria, Va., volunteering has become a "second career" as challenging and rewarding as his first career as chief economist for the Internal Revenue Service.

Kenadjian is considered a leading authority on the underground economy. Now, at a Volunteers of America shelter in Arlington, Va., he teaches homeless men and women to succeed in the above ground economy.

In his biweekly Life Skills Training class, the Harvard University-trained economist sticks to the basics: how to look for a job, how to dress for an interview, how to be responsible, and how to manage conflict and emotions in the workplace.



Retired IRS Chief Economist Berdj Kenadjian volunteers to teach homeless men and women how to succeed in today's economy. In his biweekly Life Skills Training class. The Harvard University-trained economist sticks to the basics: how to look for a job, how to dress for an interview, how to be responsible, and how to manage conflict and emotions in the workplace. Photo courtesy of Volunteers of America

"The worst aspect of homelessness is how people can become reconciled to a life of complete dependence," Kenadjian said. "I tell my class, 'I don't just want to help you make a living, I want to help you make a life.'"

"Reaching and uplifting" people to richer and more productive lives has been Volunteers of America's mission since 1896. Today, the organization is one of the nation's largest and most comprehensive human service charities, serving more than 1.5 million people annually — abused, neglected and abandoned children, at-risk youth, the frail elderly, families in crisis, and people with disabilities or chronic illness.

Volunteers of America's mission also reaches people who have a need to serve, and who can bring career skills and experiences to meet pressing social needs. In fact, the charity's active volunteer ranks include more than 50,000 corporate and government retirees like Berdj Kenadjian.

"These helping hands are a priceless asset," said Volunteers of America's President Charles Gould. "They stretch the resources we receive from government and from private giving. Without our donors and volunteers, our work would be impossible."

Volunteers of America participates in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) as a member of the Human Service Charities of America federation.

Briefly

Looking for a few good women

A female drill team is now being formed. If you are interested in joining, please call Lance Cpl. McIntyre at 577-1329. The first meeting is scheduled for Jan. 9 at the Great Escape.

New Parent Support Program

The Parent Support Program is currently hosting a 'play morning event' the third Thursday of each month from 10 - 11:30 a.m. at the Admiral Baker Recreation Area. There will be crafts, snacks and toys available for participants. To register or get directions call 577-9812.

BMC holiday hours announced

During the Christmas holiday period the Branch Medical Clinic will be open normal hours with reduced personnel. The BMC will be closed Dec. 25 -26, Jan. 1 - 2. Acute care will be available.

During this period a duty medical officer will be onboard from 7:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. daily. The pharmacy department will follow

the same holiday schedule with normal hours resuming Jan. 2. Any servicemembers needing 'up-chits' should arrange for them early in the month of Dec.

Normal hours of operation are: Monday-Thursday 7:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. and Friday 7:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. The clinic is closed weekends and holidays. Telephone: 577-9961. Refills: (619) 532-8418. Other holiday closures are Jan. 1, 2001 for New Year's Day, Jan. 15 for Martin Luther King's birthday, Feb. 19 for President's Day and May 28 for Memorial Day.

PMO cracks down on racing

A concern has risen pertaining to off-base racing. A large number of Marines are being stopped, ticketed and fined for racing. The San Diego Police Department requested the assistance of Miramar Military Police to help curb Marines' involvement in illegal racing.

Marines involved in racing may not be aware of other criminal activities that accompany racing. These activities include illegal gambling, assaults, stabbings, shootings and

other gang activity. If Marines are caught racing, they could be arrested and their cars impounded. The associated legal and impound fees could cost a Marine thousands of dollars. In an effort to ensure the safety of Marines, the Provost Marshal's Office will work with SDPD, targeting known racing areas. At the SDPD's discretion, identified Marines, stopped for racing, may be turned over to the PMO and possibly charged under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

O'Club hosts Tech Expo

The MCAS Miramar Officers' Club welcomes the Technology Exposition 2000, Dec. 5, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Computer Network Systems Division and G-6 are sponsoring the exposition.

More than 20 exhibitors will be demonstrating the latest in computer advancements and office products. There is no charge for admission.

For more information contact the chief of CNSD, Larry Norris at (858) 577-1933.



The Toys for Tots Program is hosting a five and eight kilometer run to raise toys for Christmas.

It is scheduled for Dec. 16 at 8:00 a.m. here. The start and finish line is in front of the Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Bldg. 8380. Runners are asked to bring an unwrapped toy for the program. Register before Monday to avoid late fees, or register day of event starting at 6:30 a.m. See more info online at www.mccsmiramar.com, or register at http://www.active.comevent_detail.cfm?event_id=243801. The event is sponsored by the San Diego USO, (619) 235-6503.

Sergeant Major's Corner

By Sgt. Maj. Ira J. Lott

MCABWA Sergeant Major

One day, an expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and to drive home a point, used an illustration those students will never forget and I would like to pass it on to you.

As he stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers he said, "Okay, time for a quiz." He pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouth mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. He also produced about a dozen fist-size rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the class yelled, "Yes."

The time management expert replied, "Really?" He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. He dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks. He then asked the group once, more, "Is the jar full?" By this time the class was on to him. "Probably not," one of them answered. "Good!" he replied.

He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, "Is this jar full?" "No!" the class shouted. Once again he said, "Good."

Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?" One eager beaver raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!"

"No," the speaker replied, "That's not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all." What are the "big rocks" in your lifetime? Your loved ones, your faith, your education, your dreams, a worthy cause, teaching or mentoring others?

Remember to put these big rocks in first or you'll never get them in at all. So, tonight, or in the morning, when you are reflecting on this short story, ask yourself this question: What are the "big rocks" in my life? Then, put those in your jar first.

During this time of giving thanks for our possessions, happy holidays to all and continue to be safe!



Semper Fidelis

Lt. Col. John D. Downey salutes in front of the colors during the national anthem at his retirement ceremony Nov. 21 across the street from the Station Theater here. He retires after 20 years of dedicated service. He plans on staying in the area and furthering his career in commercial aviation. Most of all he plans on spending a lot of time with his family.

Photo by
Cpl. Mike Camacho



Remembering the forgotten war, 50 years later

By Staff Sgt. P. I. Cox

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Sandwiched between World War II and Vietnam, the Korean War like a middle child was a victim of timing.

World War II produced Hitler, one of the most hated figures of the 20th century. Troops fought in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands.

Images of the Holocaust, Hiroshima and Nagasaki still galvanize us even today.

Vietnam invaded our living rooms. It was a grotesque series that dominated primetime. Young adults shook off their apathy

and found their political voice. Protest songs gave that voice eloquence.

The Korean War did not have a producer, villain or soundtrack. It had young people far from home being heroic. Some were wounded and others died. All left loved ones behind. The Battle of the Chosin Reservoir captured all of these elements.

The Chosin battle was primal. The 1st Marine Division struggled against a harsh environment, hunger and bitter cold. This was as critical as their fight against an enemy that was all-around.

They suffered 4,418 casualties during their Nov. 27 to Dec. 9, 1950 push from the Chosin Reservoir to the Hungnam Perimeter. An additional 7,313 died from frostbite and digestive ailments.

North Korean forces invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. This is how the Korean War began. It ended July 27, 1953, when the Korean armistice was signed.

The Pusan/Naktong Perimeter's defense involved 84,478 American troops. It was the war's first major engagement and lasted from Aug. 4 to Sept. 16.

Two major offensives in 1950 were the Inchon Landing and Operation and the

liberation of Seoul. Between Sept. 15 and 30, 70,000, 1st Marine Division and 7th Infantry Division troops landed at Inchon and liberated Seoul.

Communist forces captured Seoul in the first weeks of 1951. They numbered 500,000. They pushed U.N. forces 50 miles south of the 38th parallel. However, U.N. forces recaptured Seoul in Operation

Ripper, March 7 to April 4.

Chinese communist forces launched the First Spring Offensive April 22 to 29. It was the largest single battle of the war.

Their 27 divisions, 250,000 men-strong, went up against five U.S.

army divisions and the 1st Marine Division. In the waning months of 1951 and for the remainder of the war, air initiatives took on a larger role.

A total of 1,403 planes bombed Pyongyang, on Aug. 29, 1952. American forces struck this major North Korean city in the largest single-day air raid of the war.

Air assaults increased during 1953. Carrier-based aircraft flew a record setting 184 offensive sorties from the *USS Princeton* on June 15.

Marine Corps and Navy aircraft set another record. They flew 910 sorties for the highest combined one-day total.

Marine Air Group 12 flew a record-breaking 217 combat sorties on the last day of June.

This record-breaking trend continued into July. On the 25th, 77 planes set a new mark by flying 538 offensive and 62 defensive sorties.

Two days later the war ended. However, it has stayed in the thoughts and memories of the troops who served there. Now 50 years later it is in the forefront of our thoughts as we remember the personnel who fought, suffered and died in that forgotten war.



DoD photo



DoD photo

(Above) Marines carry a wounded comrade from the front lines to a forward aid station. (Below) Marines hurriedly load the last patient aboard an HTL-4 helicopter for an evacuation to a rear area aid station, May 16, 1952. To coordinate, plan and schedule the Korean War commemorative activities of the Sea Services, the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard have formed the Sea Services Korean War Commemoration Committee, chaired by the director, Navy staff. For more information about these activities, please contact the community relations branches of the Navy at (703) 697-0250, Marine Corps at (703) 614-5102 or Coast Guard at (202) 267-0929 or write: Chairman, Sea Services Korean War Commemoration Committee, OPNAV N09B, 2000 Navy Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20350-2000. For more information about the official U.S. Korean War Commemoration, visit <http://Korea50.army.mil> on the Internet.



DoD photo



By Cpl. Kristopher S. Haloj

Photo by Cpl. Scott Whittington

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 put servicemembers and civilians alike to the test in the 18th Annual Volkslauf Mud Run held here Nov. 17.

Over 700 people, in teams and individually, from all over the San Diego area, and even Arizona, matched themselves against the infamous, grimey 10K plus, obstacle course.

The Volkslauf, German for “peoples run,” hosted by HMM-163, has provided much needed dollars for local charities since it’s beginning in 1982. The proceeds from the event are being donated to a number of local charities.

The event began near Hangar 0 and

routed contestants across the flight line and Interstate 15, through a tunnel filled with water, and into East Miramar where the fun began.

A low crawl strip nearly 100-yards-long with half of it thick, wet mud and half hard, dusty ground waited quietly on the other side of the tunnel.

Contestants had to dig deep to find the strength to continue and muscle through. Soaking wet and covered in dirt, runners made their way through the dry hills of East Miramar, the sun blazing down upon them with its blistering rays posing as a giant obstacle in itself.

See **Volkslauf**, page 9



Photo by Cpl. Kristopher S. Haloj



Photo by Cpl. Kristopher S. Haloj

The highlight of the 6.6-mile Volkslauf course was the ‘death ditch,’ four-foot deep mud pits measuring up to a quarter-mile long (pictured above, top left and bottom left). The grueling course also included a muddy low crawl underneath assimilated barbed wire, and several walls and rolling hills. For HMM-163, this years course proved to be a notch above previous courses, according to Capt. Kevin M. Duffy, event organizer. “We improved on the course. The mud pits, the walls, everything,” said Duffy. “Everything worked out really well.” According to Duffy the event was not only put together for charity but to bring the Marines of HMM-163 together with other squadrons and the local community to promote a positive relationship.

All systems go...

MALS-16 test cell ensures aviation engine safety

By Cpl. Micheal O. Foley

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

A team of aircraft mechanics from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 pulls an engine out of a CH-53E helicopter and breaks it down. They find the problem, repair it and rebuild the engine. Before the engine goes back on the aircraft, the Marines of MALS-16's test cell must ensure it is safe. After mechanics repair an engine, the test cell connects it to a simulator and runs it to check that it functions normally.

"The most important thing I tell new Marines in

training is that it is our job is to try to fail every motor," said Staff Sgt. Kenneth L. Jourdan, MALS-16 staff noncommissioned officer in charge. "If we can't fail it then it's a damn good motor going out the door."

For Jourdan, ensuring the engines are up to par is extra special, because his brother-in-law is a crew chief with a CH-46E squadron. His brother-in-law may depend on the engine that his section tests.

Although many of the other Marines in the section don't have the same personal

reasons to check aircraft engines, they know that they have an important job.

The MALS-16 test cell Marines' mission starts when a newly-repaired engine arrives on a truck. They place it on a machine that simulates the rest of the aircraft with key components, such as transmission, fuel lines and exhaust.

Once the engine is in place, Marines power it up from an adjoining room and observe and record how it runs under different conditions. They also check param-

eters, such as engine temperature and rotations per minute in a sound-absorbing building called a "hush house."

Although a lot of the engine noise is absorbed by the hush house, a faint rumbling can still be heard standing outside. The small rumbling turns into a overpowering screaming inside the room where the engine is running. Marines inside this room are required to wear double hearing protection while working on a running engine.

While they are enduring the noise, test cell Marines look for engine leaks, listen for strange noises and watch for other types of malfunctions. It takes only the smallest discrepancy to fail an engine.

"This is the place to have things go wrong," said Jourdan. "If an engine isn't good enough we want it to malfunction here instead of on an aircraft in the sky."

Sometimes things do go wrong in the hush house, although not often. Most breakdowns can be as simple as a bearing going out and bouncing around the cell like a pinball. Jourdan recalls

one of the worst malfunctions he has seen in a hush house, when an engine spewed flames from the front and back.

"With the electrical components, high temperatures and fast moving parts, it is a very dangerous place to be if you don't know what you're doing," said Jourdan. "I've been out here more than 11 years and haven't been hurt."



Cpl. Anthony J. Jesmond, test cell operator, prepares an engine on a machine that simulates the other main components of a helicopter. Once the engine is hooked up, it will be tested to ensure it was repaired correctly. Photo by Cpl. Micheal O. Foley

To ensure test cell Marines know their job, they are handpicked from the pool of willing MALS-16 power plant mechanics. The test cell team takes new Marines step by step and slowly teaches them every detail of the job before they can take on the challenges by themselves.



Cpl. Christian Cruz, test cell operator, teaches Pfc. Luis E. Plascencia, "cord man" in training, the basics of testing helicopter engines. Photo by Cpl. Micheal O. Foley

Once a new Marine joins the unit he starts as a "cord man," the Marine who stands in the room with the engine while it is running and looks for the smallest discrepancies. Then he graduates to the recorder position, where he records how the engine behaves during each test. The next rung on the test cell ladder is the operator's position.

This Marine acts as a pilot while he operates the simulator and runs the engine. He is responsible for shutting the engine down at the first sign of danger.

The test cell is a tight section within the Powerplants Section of MALS-16 and pays special attention to training new Marines. They believe they have one of the most important missions in the Marine Corps, because they leave no question that every engine put into the sky is a quality product.



Test cell recorders are responsible for recording an engine's performance during tests. The recorders statistics show whether the engine will pass or fail. Photo by Cpl. Micheal O. Foley

Holiday safety tips

With the holidays around the corner and anxious travelers on the road, here are a few tips to keep in mind while driving.

- Ensure that you get a good night's sleep and start out refreshed. Don't leave immediately after working all day.
- Have a road map, flashlight, and tool kit packed and make sure you have a good spare tire and a working jack.
- Pull over every couple of hours to take a break if driving alone, if traveling with others, switch drivers. Don't chance driving while fatigued.
- Allow yourself plenty of travel time in both directions. Don't plan on driving to "beat the clock" to get back just in time to go back to work.
- Make sure you have your leave papers,

For more information contact the station safety office at (858) 577-1359 or speak to your section safety representative.

- ID card, license, registration, proof of insurance, adequate funds and phone number for your quarterdeck or duty office.
- If you have small children in the car, ensure they are properly restrained in child safety seats.
 - Make sure all passengers are buckled up.
 - If fatigue sets in and you're not going to make it back, call for an extension of your leave, tell the duty office where you are and check in to a motel and get some sleep! Don't drive drowsy.
 - Don't drink and drive.

2000 international and military mail Christmas dates

To ensure delivery of Christmas cards and packages to military APO/FPO addresses overseas and to international addresses, the United States Postal Service suggests that Christmas mailing be completed by the dates listed below.

Military mail addressed to:	First Class letters/cards	Priority Mail
APO/FPO AE Zips 090-098	Dec. 10	Dec. 10
APO/FPO AA Zips 340	Dec. 10	Dec. 10
APO/FPO AP Zips 962-966	Dec. 10	Dec. 10

International mail addressed to:	Air letters/cards	Air Parcel Post
Africa	Dec. 2	Dec. 2
Asia/ Pacific Rim	Dec. 9	Dec. 9
Australia/ New Zealand	Dec. 9	Dec. 9
Canada/ Mexico	Dec. 13	Dec. 13
Caribbean	Dec. 9	Dec. 9
Central & South America	Dec. 2	Dec. 2
Europe	Dec. 9	Dec. 9
Middle East	Dec. 9	Dec. 9

For more information on call Chief Warrant Officer Woods or Gunnery Sgt. Norris at 577-1329

Pet owners get help with quarantine costs

Courtesy of
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Servicemembers and DoD civilians are getting a little help from Uncle Sam when they have to quarantine their pets during permanent-change-of-station moves. As of Oct. 1, 2000, the government will kick in \$275 to help defray the cost of quarantining pets. Congress approved the payment as part of the Fiscal 2001 Defense Authorization Act. The payment is limited to costs associated with quarantining cats and dogs. Cats and dogs traveling from the United States to Iceland, Great Britain, Guam and Hawaii are routinely quarantined. The quarantine can range from 30 days to six months.

Volkslauf,

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Once they endured all of that and more they found themselves facing one-quarter mile of dirty, funky, thick-as-poo mud affectionately known as the "Death Ditch." This strip of God-forsaken nastiness caused contestants to take a pause before accepting its challenge.

"I was beat down, but I was having so much fun it didn't bother me. But when I got to the top of the berm and looked down, I saw this massive, I mean massive stretch of mud," said Lance Cpl. Casey Wilson, military police officer here. "That's when I decided to walk a bit to save my energy because I knew I was going to need it."

After making their way through the Death Ditch, just when the mud soaked contestants thought it was smooth sailing from then on out, they where faced with yet another obstacle. Another mud trench, no where near the size or volume of the Death Ditch, but it proved to be quite an obstacle for many runners.

"After the first mud pit, I was tired. I had so much fun wading through the mud but it exhausted me. Then I came up on the next pit," said Cpl. Henry Flawson, Camp Pendleton administrative clerk. "It didn't look like much compared to the first one but it was pretty fierce after enduring all the obstacles that I came across."

After all was said and done, and the competitors made their way across the finish line, dirty and tired, the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Mudswimmers where the declared winners.

'Kid Fit' program educates about fitness

By Cpl. Mike Camacho

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Semper Fit is teaching children fitness awareness at the "Kid Fit" program from 3 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays in the aerobics room at the Station Fitness Center. The program is designed to give children a good attitude about health and exercise.

"If a child is in a fitness frame of mind when they're young, chances are it will follow on through to adulthood," said Laurie Lund, Kid Fit program leader.

To ensure that the fitness education is enjoyable, the Kid Fit program leaders make it fun with relays, games and upbeat dance music. The children understand the program's importance and rave about it.

"The intent of this class is to teach children a love of exercise while encouraging creativity and freedom of movement in a team atmosphere," said Kelley Sitar, Kid Fit program director.

"I like this class because it's fun, and I'll be healthy forever," said Tierra Adams, 7, Kid Fit participant.

"It's just fun. I really liked crab walking because I never did that before, and the push-ups were good so I could practice and get stronger," said Isidro V. Raymundo Jr., 9, Kid Fit participant.

All of the children seem to have a positive relationship with each other.

"I like Kid Fit cause we get to do the funnest exercises and make new friends," said Jason Santos, 7, Kid Fit participant.



Laurie Lund, Kid Fit leader, demonstrates a stretching exercise in a program dedicated to promoting fitness education. The children then stretch to upbeat dance music while gathered in a circle. Photo by Cpl. Mike Camacho

The class also teaches children how to respect each other.

At the end of the class, to calm them down, the Kid Fit leaders have each child say something encouraging about the class. Children comment on the games, but mostly about each other.

"Occasionally there's somebody who'll pick up on the shy one and point them out, they'll say something like 'I like the way that person did that particular exercise,'" said Lund. "It's good because it builds them up and boosts their ego."

"It's just a good way to teach children

that exercise can be fun, and hopefully they'll keep the right attitude about health and fitness as they grow older," said Lisa Griswold, Kid Fit leader.

For more information on this or any other health or fitness programs contact the Semper Fit Center 577-1702.

MAG-46 Marines conquer Grand Canyon

In effort to raise funds for local schools

By Cpl. Mike Camacho

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Hiking 46 miles through the bottom of the Grand Canyon, Ariz., in freezing cold temperatures, rough rugged terrain and continuously demanding trails is no walk in the park, even for Marines.

Recently, in conjunction with Marine Air Group 46's Partnership in Education and the San Diego Reads program, four Marines set out on an excursion to raise funds for Mason Elementary and Walker Elementary schools.

Lance Cpl. Demetrius Steele, Marine Attack Fighter Squadron 134 aviation electrician; Cpl. Alvin Paniagua, VMFA-134 flight equipment technician; Cpl. Patrick N. Baker, VMFA-134 seat mechanic; and Staff Sgt. Michael Pfister, VMFA-134 aviation electrician, departed from Miramar Nov. 9 to their journey through the Grand Canyon. The reason behind this is best explained in their slogan, "Backpacking for Books."

The idea to raise money for books spawned from MAG 46's Partnership in Education with Mason Elementary and Pfister's concern for the education of his child.

"I have a bright young son myself, so last year when we did 'Peddle for Literacy,' I thought it would be awesome to raise money for children who need it instead of doing it just for fun ourselves," said Pfister.

While this is the second time Marines from VMFA-134 have done a fund-raiser like this, it's not an annual fund-raiser.



During a break from a demanding 47-mile hike through the Grand Canyon, Ariz., (pictured from left to right) Cpl. Patrick Baker, Staff Sgt. Michael Pfister, Lance Cpl. Demetrius Steele and Cpl. Alvin Paniagua, all from VMFA-134, take time out to take a snapshot. Photo courtesy of Staff Sgt. Pfister

Pfister is hoping that someone will pick up the torch and carry it on when he leaves.

All four Marines made the agreement to hike the canyon with the possibility of having to submit leave papers. However, MAG 46's support provided them permissive temporary additional duty orders and some other support. All other expenses were left solely to the four fund-raisers.

To raise money these Marines went door to door asking for pledges. They were able to collect more than \$1,800. All contributions are divided between the two schools.

"The support of the military families on and around base was just incredible. They were more than happy to donate to a great cause like ours," said Pfister.

"We decided to donate the money to the schools' libraries for books that will reach all grade levels," said Pfister.

While this feat seemed painstaking and daring, these Marines seized the opportunity to do something most people never get to do. Their efforts have helped support the San

Diego community.

The Marines set off for their adventure in the greatest canyon in the world Nov. 10 with all the gear they would need for the hike and finally finished after many, many miles of snow, mud, slush, hills, rocky cliffs, sweat and pain on the evening of Nov. 12.

"It was great for me, because except for boot camp and Marine Combat Training, I never went camping or hiking. And at the same time, we were able to help the children out. So it was just an all-out great deal," said Steele.

Ultimately, these elementary schools are not the only ones in need of books. However, through volunteers and programs like MAG-46's Partnership in Education, schools like these will have some added tools to help students in San Diego County.

For more information on the Partners in Education program dial (619) 725-5592. For more information about the San Diego Reads program dial (619) 725-READS or e-mail at info@sandiegoreads.org.

Holiday spending stress

Contact Tom Graneau, MCCS Financial Management Counselor, 577,9802, to schedule a free 30-minute presentation on how to ease the stress of holiday shopping.

Holiday Magic

Join MCCS Miramar for an afternoon of Holiday Magic, noon to 6:30 p.m., at the Youth Sports Center. Have a photo taken with Santa, enjoy a holiday concert, rides, food and more. Call 577-6365 for more information.

Holiday 3-on-3 basketball

Sign up for this basketball tournament which starts Dec. 4. Entry fee is \$30 per team, and sign-up deadline is Nov. 28. Call 577-1202 for more information.

Varsity sports briefs

Miramar Roller Hockey finished the season in second place.

Tackle Football finals for the “Best of the West” Tourney are at noon today, at Main Side, Camp Pendleton.

Soccer Men’s team placed 4th out of 36 teams in the Nov. 25-26 Thanksgiving Kearney Mesa Tourney.

Basketball Men’s team will be hosting the 2nd Annual Basketball

Invitational at Miramar today through Sunday at MCRD. Pt. Loma, Camp Pendleton and 29 Palms will be traveling here to participate in the tourney.

Intramural sports briefs

Softball Finals will be played today at 11:15 a.m. on Field #4.

Volleyball Leagues run every Thursday night from 5:15 to 8:15 p.m. at the Main Gym. The last game is scheduled for Dec. 14.

Explorers needed

For those guys and gals 14 years old and graduate of the 8th grade or 15-20 years old, looking at law enforcement as a possible career move, the Provost Marshal’s Office here is looking for motivated people for the Military Police Explorer Post Program.

This is a youth development program filled with classes, tours, ride-alongs, K-9 demonstrations and pistol firing. Additionally, explorers may be utilized for basewide events and community service projects.

“Young men and women will benefit greatly from our program,” said 2nd Lt. Jason R. Griffin. “Not only will they learn more about a career in law enforcement and the Marine Corps, but they will have

an opportunity to development themselves and gain confidence by running their own meetings, performing community service, and being guided by mentors.”

To be a part of the program, hopeful explorers need to attend a preliminary meeting scheduled for Thursday, at 7:00 p.m. at the PMO building here. The PMO building is located at the intersection of Miramar Way and Gonzalez Ave. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the advisors, identify prospective individuals and answer questions. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for Dec. 14, at 7:00 p.m. at the same location. Parents are encouraged to attend or assist at the meetings and all events with their explorer children.

“We’re always looking for more assistance,” said Griffin. “We’re looking for mature leaders that will serve as good examples and role-models for youth.”

Youth in the program would meet together twice a month not including community relation’s projects and other events.

For more information about this program, contact either Gunnery Sgt. John L. Faz at (858) 577-9809, (858) 693-5864 or 2nd Lt. Jason R. Griffin at (858) 577-7217, (858) 549-1500. Also both may be con-

tacted by email at fazjl@miramar.usmc.mil or griffinjr@3maw.usmc.mil.

Library storytime

Children’s Storytime continues every Thursday. Stories with different themes will be read, and arts and crafts are included. It’s all free, for children of all ages. The program runs 30 - 45 minutes.

For more information, call the Library at 577-1261, or visit their Web page at www.mccsmiramar.com/library.html.

New hours for Semper Fit

The Semper Fit Fitness Center is now open from 4:30 a.m. to midnight, Sunday through Thursday, and 4:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Toys for Tots

The San Diego Chapter of Toys For Tots is looking for motivated Marines to assist with our Celebrity Golf Shootout Dec. 9 and 10 at Admiral Baker Field Golf Course. Volunteers will muster at the Navy-Marine Corps Reserve Training Center, 9955 Pomerado Road, San Diego at 0600 both days for transportation to and from the golf course.

The uniform for this event is

Free

Movies

Today

Lost Souls

The Exorcist (2000)

(R) 6:30 p.m.

(R) 8:30 p.m.

Saturday

Digimon: The Movie

Titan A.E.

(PG) 6:30 p.m.

(PG) 8:30 p.m.

Sunday

Digimon: The Movie

Almost Famous

(PG) 1:00 p.m.

(R) 6:30 p.m.

camouflage utilities and morning and afternoon meals will be provided. Volunteers should coordinate within their respective units and provide a list of personnel, with a point of contact, to Gunnery Sgt. Helms at 577-8066 or helmsr@mfr.usmc.mil.

O’Club to decorate tree

Military Officer’s Spouses Club will host their annual holiday tree decorating party today at 4:30 p.m.

It will be held at the Miramar Officer’s Club. Each member should bring their ornament to add to our tree. There will be opportunity drawings.

Please come and start your holiday with some festive cheer. Contact Michelle Schroeder at (858) 503-6757.